

Red Hill, Stables and Carriage House  
Patrick Henry National Memorial  
Brookneal Vicinity  
Charlotte County  
Virginia

HABS No. VA-1034-F

HABS  
VA,  
20-BROOK,  
1-F-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, DC 20013-7127

HABS  
VA,  
22-BR  
1-F.

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

### RED HILL - STABLES AND CARRIAGE HOUSE (Patrick Henry National Memorial)

HABS No. VA-1034-F

**Location:** Approximately 1.1 miles south of State Route 619, 5.3 miles south<sup>east</sup>~~west~~ of Brookneal, in Charlotte County, Virginia.

**Present Owner/Occupant:** Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation.

**Significance:** Red Hill was the final home and burial site of Patrick Henry (1736-99), prominent Revolutionary War and early national patriot, politician, orator, and lawyer. Henry was a leader in provoking and organizing resistance to British government of the colonies. He served as governor of Virginia five times in the 1770-80s, during the American Revolution and its aftermath, and led the opposition to ratifying the U.S. Constitution in Virginia in 1788. He thereafter withdrew from state politics and resumed a successful law practice. Henry occupied Red Hill from 1794 until 1799, when he died.

Red Hill is a 1950s interpretation of a typical well-to-do eighteenth-century planter's home in Southside Virginia. While this building is alleged to represent a Henry-era stables and carriage house, this is the least authentic of all buildings at the site.

In 1978 the U.S. Department of the Interior recognized Red Hill as a national landmark and entered the property in the National Register of Historic Places. In 1986 the property was designated a National Memorial to Patrick Henry by an act of Congress.

#### PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

##### A. Physical History:

1. **Date of erection:** Reconstruction of the stables and carriage house was completed in 1965. The original Patrick Henry plantation was built at least by 1794; the much-altered and enlarged dwelling burned in February 1919.
2. **Original plans and construction:** A copy of Stanhope Johnson's 1956 reconstruction plans are on file in the Red Hill archives. All buildings at Red Hill date from the restoration/reconstruction.

##### B. Historical Context: The eighteenth-century designation stables-carriage house would have been an important plantation dependency, though no evidence of one at Red Hill was located.

The cabin predates the reconstruction/construction of the stables-carriage house in 1965 when remains of it were incorporated into the latter; the structure is of doubtful authenticity.

PART II.      ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

A.      General Statement:

1.      Architectural character: The combined stables and carriage house consist of a one and one-half story log cabin with a large shed-roofed addition to the north, and a smaller, banked two-story addition to the east.
2.      Condition of fabric: Good.

B.      Description of Exterior:

1.      Overall dimensions: The stables, neé log cabin, is 16'-0" x 20'-3", the latter facade four bays long. The shed addition, which encloses space for two carriages, is 17'-0" x about 16'-0". The east gabled addition is 14'-0" x 9'-0".
2.      Foundations: The log block and east addition have uncut flagstone foundations. The lower portion of the north and east walls of the shed addition is also of stone, as are two post supports under the shed. A small uncut flagstone foundation pad protrudes from the north wall of the shed, and supports a rain barrel.
3.      Walls: The walls and roof pediments of the additions are clad with variable-width horizontal weatherboards. The stable roof pediments are clad with irregular wood boards. The stable walls are square-hewn V-notched logs with concrete chinking. Along the juncture of the stables' west pediment and wall is a shelf ca. 2' wide. Protruding from the stables' west pediment, centered on the roofline and above the opening, is a stout wood beam that supports a block and tackle. The corners of both additions have crude wood molding.
4.      Structural systems, framing: Wood frame, log and chink.
5.      Openings:
  - a.      Doorways, doors: The shed addition is largely open on the west facade, revealing two carriage stalls. The north stall has a half-height board-and-batten door. Two large board-and-batten doors, wide enough to accommodate a horse, open in the west and north facades of the stable. The loft, centered on the west pediment of the log block, has a board-and-batten door. Another doorway, also with a board-and-batten door, is in the pediment of the east

addition; this is accessed by a bridge that is approximately 8'-0" long. A large wood dowel protrudes from the facade near the east entrance, which may have served as a coat hook.

- b. Windows, shutters: The structure has two windows, both in the east addition. The south facade features a single six-light wood casement that opens inward. The east facade features a four-light wood casement that opens inward to the stairwell. The south facade of the log block features four 15" x 30" vertical openings, fitted with board-and-batten shutters. A fifth opening, 15-0" x 15-0", also covered by a shutter, is located directly beneath the third covered opening from the west.

6. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The stable block and east addition have steeply pitched gable roofs with their ridges oriented east to west. The north shed addition has a long, shallow, pitched roof. All are covered with wood shingles. Centered atop the log block is a square cupola with a shingled base, louvered vents on each facade, and a pyramidal roof covered with sheet metal.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The north eave of the shed has a V-shaped wood gutter and a wood downspout that empties into a rain barrel. The eaves are simple and unadorned. The log block has open eaves and a protruding wood shelf on the west gable end.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor plans: The ground floor of the log block contains stalls for draft horses and a riding horse, a tack room, and a passage that occupies the length of the building. Located on the north wall of the hallway, opposite the east stall, is a large tackle box. The attic space of the building serves as a hayloft. The gabled addition contains a stairway in the northeast corner that accesses the hayloft. The shed addition contains two carriage stalls divided by a low plank partition. Access to the carriage house from the stable is through a doorway at the easternmost end of the passage.
- 2. Stairway: The stairs are rough wood boards with a crude wood baluster.
- 3. Flooring: The floor of the stables and east addition is uncut flagstone; the shed addition is packed earth. The floor of the stable loft and east addition loft is wood plank.
- 4. Wall and ceiling finish: The first-floor walls are unfinished.

RED HILL - STABLES AND CARRIAGE HOUSE  
HABS No. VA-1034-F/Page 4

5. Doorways and doors: Board-and-batten doors. There are four interior doorways: between the north addition and tackroom into the stable corridor, respectively; in the stable corridor by the tackle box; and a half-height door between the easternmost stall and the corridor.
6. Decorative features and trim: A flagstone watering trough is located about 10' northwest of the carriage house rain barrel.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The stable-carriage house is located on the west side of the site, while all other dependencies are east of the dwelling. It is slightly banked into the hillside, and all but one entrance is on the west facade of the structure, accessing the road that once encircled the cluster of buildings. Relatively isolated, the south is the river, to the north is open landscape, and to the west is undeveloped forest area.
2. Outbuildings: Besides the stables and carriage house, the estate includes the dwelling and five primary outbuildings that are described in individual reports: Addendum to law office, VA-1034-A; kitchen, VA-1034-C; smokehouse, VA-1034-D; privy, VA-1034-E; and slave cabin, VA-1034-G.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION: See Dwelling report, VA-1034-B.